



**City of Cincinnati, Ohio**  
Domestic Partner Registry  
Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in the City of Cincinnati's Domestic Partner Registry. As a record of the City of Cincinnati, the Domestic Partner Registry is a public record and subject to full disclosure under State laws regarding public records. Below are answers to frequently asked questions.

### **What are the criteria for a Domestic Partnership?**

By City Ordinance, applicants must meet these criteria, attest to meeting this criteria, and have a notary witness signatures to the attestation:

1. neither of us are currently married to or legally separated from another person under statutory or common law, as recognized by the state of Ohio; and
2. we share responsibility for each others' common welfare; and
3. we are not related by blood in a manner that would bar our marriage in the State of Ohio; and
4. we are both at least eighteen (18) years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract; and
5. we share the same residence; and
6. we have been in an exclusive relationship with each other for at least 6 months with the intention of remaining in the relationship indefinitely; and
7. we are financially interdependent to each other as demonstrated by a signed declaration of financial interdependence and have provided the City proof of at least four (4) of the following:
  - a. Joint ownership of real estate property or joint tenancy on a residential lease; or
  - b. Joint ownership of an automobile; or
  - c. Joint bank or credit account; or
  - d. Joint liabilities (e.g., credit cards or loans); or
  - e. A will designating the eligible Equal Partner as primary beneficiary; or
  - f. A retirement plan or life insurance policy beneficiary designation form designating the eligible Equal Partner as primary beneficiary; or
  - g. A durable power of attorney signed to the effect that the domestic partners have granted powers to one another.

Domestic Partnerships which meet the above criteria may be registered by the parties with the City of Cincinnati using the application process described above.

### **What do I do to apply?**

After completing the application and swearing or affirming to the accuracy of the information on the form, applicants will sign the form and have it notarized. Next steps are to submit the form, via mail or in person. Applicants will receive a copy of the notarized application. A personalized certificate will be provided via US mail in about 2 weeks.

### **Is notarization really required?**

Yes. Your application will not be processed and payment cannot be made unless your application has been notarized. Applicants should complete the form but not sign it until in front of a notary. The notary you use will explain their rules for establishing your identity. **THE FORM MUST BE SIGNED IN FRONT OF A NOTARY. PLEASE DO NOT SIGN THE FORM UNLESS YOU ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF A NOTARY.** Forms that have not been notarized will not be accepted. Forms must be notarized before arriving. Notary services are NOT available on-site.

### **Where can I get an application?**

Applications for the Domestic Partner Registry are available at the City of Cincinnati website [www.Cincinnati-oh.gov](http://www.Cincinnati-oh.gov) or, during business hours, which are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (holidays may affect this schedule), in the Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Applications may be submitted in person or via mail. Because original signatures with a signed notary seal are required for the registry, applications may **not** be submitted electronically.

### **How do I Apply By Mail?**

A completed and notarized application may be mailed to the Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, which is located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. There is a fee of \$45 for registering your Domestic Partnership; if paying by mail, you may pay by money order. Cash or credit cards are not acceptable for mail-in registrations.

### **What is the fee?**

The cost to register is \$45 dollars.

### **What methods of payment are accepted?**

Applicants may pay in person at the Treasury window, (located on the Second Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202) by cash, money order, or credit card. THERE IS A 3% surcharge for all credit card payments. Personal Checks are not accepted as payment.

Applicants may pay by money order when submitting an application via US mail. Personal Checks are not accepted as payment.

### **How do I Apply In Person?**

Step one is to bring your completed and notarized application to the Second Floor of City Hall to pay the \$45 application fee. You may pay by money order, credit card, or cash. You will receive a receipt to take to the Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, during regular business hours, which are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (holidays may affect this schedule). One copy of the application form and your receipt needed to complete your registration.

### **What happens when I submit my application?**

After completing the form and having it notarized, the original notarized application and \$45 registration fee should be mailed to: Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, ATTN: Domestic Partner Registry, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. After processing, applicants will be mailed a personalized certificate and a copy of the notarized application.

### **What are the steps for Terminating a Registered Domestic Partnership?**

Once registered, each member of the Domestic Partnership has a responsibility to report the end of the Domestic Partnership to the City of Cincinnati so that the registration may be terminated. This may be done by completing the Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership form which is available at the City of Cincinnati website [www.Cincinnati-oh.gov](http://www.Cincinnati-oh.gov) or, during business hours, in the Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

**Is there a cost to terminate a Domestic Partnership?**

No. There is no cost to file a Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership, which can be submitted by mail (Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202) or in person. Only one party is needed to sign the Notice of Termination. That party is responsible for sending a copy of the form to the other party, if the other party is still living.

**Is either party required to live or work in City of Cincinnati to register a Domestic Partnership? Is there a geographic restriction for registering a Domestic Partnership?**

No. There is no requirement that either party live or work in the City of Cincinnati. Any Domestic Partnership that meets the City of Cincinnati's criteria may be registered.

**Is there a fee to register a Domestic Partnership?**

Yes. There is a \$45 fee to register a Domestic Partnership with the City of Cincinnati. In person, payment can be made by cash, credit card, or money order. Through the mail, payment can be made by money order.

**Will Domestic Partnership information be shared with others?**

Maybe. As a government, the City of Cincinnati is bound by State laws regarding the disclosure of public records. Information submitted to register a Domestic Partnership is a public record and the City is generally required to provide this information to any media outlet, business, organization or individual that requests it. Except as allowed by State law, there is no method to remove any of the information including an applicant's name or address from the public record. Individuals may choose to not register their Domestic Partnership and not to share personal information with the City if they wish to limit public access to an applicant's personal information.

**When will a Domestic Partnership registration become valid? Is there a waiting period for a Domestic Partnership?**

The City of Cincinnati Domestic Partnership Registry will go into effect on September 24, 2014. No Domestic Partnerships can be registered before that date. After that date, a Domestic Partnership is considered registered when applicants receive completed material from the City of Cincinnati. A Domestic Partnership is valid until a Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership is received and filed with the Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council.

**Are applicants required to live at the same address full-time to qualify sharing a common address?**

Applicants are required to share a common address, but are not required to have only one address. Applicants may have a separate vacation home, investment property, or a second address used in order to live closer to a work site and this does not disqualify applicants from sharing a common address.

**How do I receive benefits once a Domestic Partnership has been registered?**

You should speak directly to the organization from which you seek to receive a discount or benefit. By itself, the Domestic Partner Registry does not provide any special discounts or access to benefits. It is a tool that domestic partners can choose to show that they are eligible for domestic partner benefits offered by employers or family discounts provided by businesses and organizations. The registry is seen as a way for domestic partners to record their relationships and for businesses and organizations to have a neutrally administered means of qualifying person for benefits or discounts that they may choose to offer.

**Does a company or organization have an obligation to recognize my domestic partnership?**

No. The registry is entirely optional for all parties. No company is required to provide discounts or benefits. No company is required to recognize the domestic partner registry as qualification for whatever discounts they may choose to offer.

**My question is not answered here. How can I get more information?**

Please contact the Office of the Cincinnati City Clerk of Council by phone at 513.352.3246 by email at [clerkofcouncil@Cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:clerkofcouncil@Cincinnati-oh.gov), or by mail at Office of the Cincinnati Clerk of Council, located on the Third Floor of Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 308, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.